

**Abstract**

An internal combustion engine comprising at least one cylinder, in which combustion of a fuel-air mixture compressed in the cylinder by a piston is initiated by time-controlled external ignition, wherein there is provided at least one laser light source for time-controlled external ignition and the laser light is focussed in the combustion chamber (32) on to at least two real focal points (19). Use of a holographic optical element for focussing of the laser light.

(Figure 6)